

# 2018-2019 Annual Report



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**[commaction.org](http://commaction.org)**





A LETTER FROM OUR

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

SHARON PRICE

Hello everyone,

I'm so proud to present to you the Council's 18-19 Annual Report. As the agency's fifth executive director, when I first took the helm of the organization in October I couldn't have imagined the road just ahead—the call to lead and inspire a team of 400 staff to use all of our collective creativity, innovation, and experience to meet the urgent needs of a growing number of families facing extreme circumstances as a result of a global pandemic.

Shortly after being named the executive director last year, my Board of Directors hosted a gathering of business and community leaders to welcome me to my new role. During that gathering I shared my expectations of what I wanted the Council to achieve under my leadership. I am proud to say that even in just the first few months of my tenure we are doubling down on the effective measures that address poverty in our community and returning to grassroots movements to address structural inequality, keeping always at the forefront our desire to ensure that the voices of families with low income are heard. As the stories in this annual report will demonstrate, we are continuing the vital work that addresses the needs of people in our community during all stages of life.

Many of you may know that prior to being named the executive director of this great agency, I served as its Head Start Director and Director of Childhood Development for six years. Head Start and early childhood education hold a special place in my heart and over the last year I was proud to lead my team in onboarding a fifth Head Start program that covers an additional eight counties in South Central Kentucky. I believe that every family wants what's best for their children the same way I want what's best for mine. It is our great honor to bring our unique blend of high-quality education and comprehensive approach to serving families to nearly 3,000 children and families every year.

As I am writing this our community and our wider world face unprecedented times. In the face of a pandemic, the Council is continuing to provide for our community any way we can. As social distancing and preventative measures become more important with each passing day, I am grateful for the hard work and dedication of our staff. Our community will face unforeseen hardships in the coming months, and I believe that the Council should and will be there to support those who are in need. My staff and I will continue to assess the needs of our community and adapt to new challenges that may arise. Moving forward, you can expect to see more efficient and creative initiatives that help to strengthen our community and provide an opportunity for recovery and in to thriving circumstances.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you. I look forward to working with you and our greater community.





A FAREWELL FROM OUR

# BOARD CHAIR

MICHELE C. LEE



## **Greetings!**

**My name is Michele C. Lee, and for the past six years I have had the great privilege of being the Chairperson of the Board of Directors for Community Action Council. I am delighted to join Sharon in presenting the agency's most recent Annual Report. As I look back at the past year and my time as Chairperson as a whole, it has been an honor to work alongside our staff—and, through them, the participants of our programs—to ensure that we continue working toward preventing, reducing, and eliminating poverty in our communities. This report is an excellent summary and look at the achievements of this wonderful organization, not just to combat poverty, but to address its root causes and concerns in order to make systemic changes.**

**As my two-term service as Board Chairperson draws to a close, it gives me great pride to think about the accomplishments of the Council during my tenure. Over the last six years our agency expanded Head Start operations in to eight new counties, developed a statewide partnership with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services' Department for Community Based Services to provide transitional support for youth exiting foster care, and rapidly expanded our housing and supportive services across a wide service territory, including providing substance abuse and mental health services in 13 Kentucky counties. The difference Community Action Council is making in our communities every day is truly awe inspiring. As a longtime Board Member, I can tell you in the past year our ability to assist families to move out of poverty has increased significantly. Another of the many things I'm proud of is the development of services in our rural communities. Just a few months ago the Council was awarded and began operating a workforce development grant from the United States Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration. This multi-year project focuses on raising the level and quality of workforce opportunities in Nicholas County, the county with the highest poverty rate among the Council's four designated communities.**

**I've been involved with the leadership of Community Action Council in some form or fashion for more than 30 years, and so I was honored to lead the search for the executive director from a national pool of highly qualified candidates. The Board of Directors has full confidence that under Sharon's leadership, especially her qualities as a strategic thinker with a solutions-driven approach to management, the Council will continue to develop innovative programming and collaborative partnerships to advance our mission. As we look ahead to the future, I'm pleased to pass the gavel of leadership to the new Board Chairperson, Denise Beatty. I know the Council will continue to help the communities we serve thrive, and I look forward to continuing to serve you, our partners and our communities in my new role as Secretary.**

**On behalf of the entire Board, I thank all of our partners, staff, and wider community for supporting us over the past year. A digital version of this report can be found on our website at [www.commaction.org](http://www.commaction.org) and I hope you will share it with your family, friends and colleagues.**



# Welcome SOUTH CENTRAL





A watershed event in the history of the Council occurred in the waning days of 2018—the Council was named the grantee to a new Head Start service area. Called South Central Head Start, or SCHS, the Council began providing comprehensive early childhood education services in the counties of Clark, Estill, Garrard, Jackson, Laurel, Madison, Powell, and Rockcastle on January 1, 2019.

Since the Council assumed operational control of an existing program in the middle of an academic year, all policies and services for the enrolled children and their families remained in place and uninterrupted through July 31, 2019, as instructed by the Office of Head Start. Beginning on August 1, 2019, the Council began implementing some new and exciting changes after spending the previous seven months assessing facilities and outdoor play environments, transportation services, curricula, staffing, recruitment efforts, and established partnerships, among other key areas.

SCHS markedly expands the geographic span of the Council's Head Start programs while providing services to 725 additional children and families through a combination of direct-managed locations and partnerships with local education systems and community-based early childhood education providers. It was quickly apparent that the increased workload and responsibilities would require the establishment of a SCHS Region administrative center. Located at 1095 Kim Kent Drive in Richmond in Madison County, this center opened in fall 2019 and currently provides office space for 10 Council employees, among them the SCHS Regional Director/Assistant Director of Child Development, April Mullins-Datko.

April Mullins-Datko had been with the Council for 10 years when she assumed the position of SCHS Regional Director and Assistant Director of Child Development for the SCHS Region. During those years she became experienced in developing partnerships between the Council and local child care providers and in overseeing the education component of the Council's Head Start programs. April is the Secretary of the Madison-Estill Community Early Childhood Council and serves on The Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence's Strong Start Kentucky coalition.

"It's my great pleasure and honor to be selected to lead our team of experts in the SCHS Region. I look forward to working collaboratively with the region's school districts, staff, parents and community to provide the Head Start

Advantage to our most vulnerable children and families. Early childhood is the most critical period of human development and the Head Start model is uniquely effective due to its comprehensive, whole-child, multi-generational approach," said Mullins-Datko. In 2019, Monica Householder was hired by the Council as a Disability and Mental Health Specialist based at the SCHS Region Center. "When the Council reached out to us, we knew it would be OK. I still see a lot of the same familiar faces, but the new faces have been great! We feel welcome by the Council and it has really supported me. I feel like I have a voice," she added.

Ashley Robidoux began at the Council as a Lead Teacher in January 2019. The following June she assumed the position of ERSEA Manager at the SCHS Region Center. She says she is pleased by the classroom improvements and enhancements, the strong emphasis on family engagement and community involvement, and on the pay increases. "All of the classrooms have new furniture and new materials. It's very cheerful and calming, which is important for the children and teachers," she said, adding: "I'm proud to be part of such a wonderful team. When I'm out visiting the sites, I see the passion my coworkers' have for the families and children we serve."

Donna Crawford began working at the Council in January 2019 as Lead Teacher at the Richmond Prep Academy. She compliments the emphasis on family engagement, the new furniture and equipment, and has some kind words for her coworkers. "I mainly deal with Angela Wells, Rebecca Agnew, and Michelle Amos. These ladies are always available to help. Rebecca has been a joy to work with." [Rebecca Agnew is a School Readiness Coach. Michelle Amos is the SCHS Child Development Operations Manager. Angela Wells is a SCHS Children's Services Coordinator.]

This project was made possible by the awarding of a more than \$40 million grant from the Office of Head Start, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Additional duration funds of more than \$1.5 million annually enable the Council to provide full-day, full-year center-based services for 158 Head Start slots, while start-up funds (currently at more than \$1.7 million) are enabling the purchase, construction, and renovation of facilities and the purchase of classroom supplies and new equipment.



**SERVING MORE  
THROUGH PARTNERSHIP**



This past year the Council began a new partnership with the Clark County Public School District. Under this agreement, previously enrolled Preschool students and the newly incoming Head Start students are now blended under one banner at the Preschool located at 30 Beckner Street in Winchester.

"The Clark County Preschool Program is now a fully blended Head Start/ KERA preschool program utilizing and implementing the most stringent and comprehensive regulations of both state and federal requirements. This practice now enhances the service delivery model to all our enrolled children. Staff employed by the district and the Council work hand-in-hand in meeting the many needs of families and children in our program," explained Donald Stump, Director of Operations for Clark County Public Schools.

Kara Davies, Clark County Preschool Principal, elaborated, "This partnership has allowed us to serve more at-risk children and families while increasing our enrollment. We've been able to expand our family engagement activities, increase participation, and ensure that families are supported through a robust parent education program." Council employee and Clark County Preschool Pathway Specialist Elisha Wills echoed the sentiment: "Clark

County has always had a very strong preschool program but we're now doing a lot more family engagement."

As for communication between her staff and Council personnel, Kara says: "We work daily with School Readiness Coach Kerry Curtis and Pathway Specialist Elisha Wills. They are super hard working, dedicated, energetic, and committed individuals and we are fortunate to have them in our building, supporting teachers, students, and families. We also work closely with April Mullins-Datko, who is very responsive, easy to work with, and helpful in meeting our needs so that we can meet our program goals. And with Sharon Price, who is friendly, approachable, and works at a high level to build partnerships that work."

In addition to 71 Head Start students, 10 Early Head Start families participate in the Preschool's home-based Early Head Start (EHS), which is aimed at children from birth to age three and, on occasion, pregnant women, said Wills.

The transition has not gone without challenges. Said Davies: "One of the main challenges was overcoming previous perceptions of what a HS partnership would be like in our school. Streamlining systems, processes, and paperwork to reduce duplication of efforts and create clear, easy to navigate systems."

"Implementing Head Start practices, especially documentation as required by OHS, was a challenge. We got into the groove, though," said Wills.

"We both, the Council and Clark County Preschool, work together to ensure data collection and monitoring activities support the vision of Preschool in our community. We coordinate activities to ensure implementation of the curriculum and program with fidelity."

Davies says she anticipates further developing and deepening the partnership between her Preschool and the Council over the coming months. "I am excited that our community is beginning the facilities planning process and I am looking forward to the contribution Head Start will have in that development. I hope to work with Head Start to install an outdoor classroom, continue to grow our program and improve quality together to meet the needs of all preschoolers in our community."

"The partnership between CAC and Clark County Preschool is a healthy partnership, both working together to ensure high quality early childhood education for vulnerable families and students. Partnerships with Head Start are essential to best serving children and families in our community."



# A Summer Scirée

A "COMMUNITY IN ACTION"



CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2019 "COMMUNITY IN ACTION" RECIPIENTS!





The Council's annual signature fundraising event, "A Summer Soirée," is a festive gala celebrating the work of the Council with full-spirited entertainment, dancing, live music, and—of course—fun! More importantly though, it is also an evening to raise public awareness about the causes and conditions of poverty and provides an opportunity for the Council to raise critical revenue to support its efforts in combatting the impacts of poverty.

On August 23, 2019, the Council hosted its fourth annual "A Summer Soirée" event at the Grand Reserve in the Historic Distillery District of Lexington, Kentucky. This elegant venue features ample space, state-of-the-art lighting and sound systems, and an illuminated dance floor. The night brought together community partners, supporters, participants, staff, stakeholders, and board members.

Amidst the excitement, the evening welcomed a moment to reflect on the value of our commitment to improving equity in Central Kentucky. Guests had the opportunity to hear testimony from Miss VaShaun Mosby, CEO and founder of VaShaun Nicole Enterprises and VaShaun Nicole Consulting. Ms. Mosby shared a heartwarming story about the struggles she once faced and how the Council's own Kesha Richardson supported her during her journey out of poverty by empowering her and helping her to figure out how to capitalize on her talents to become self-sufficient. VaShaun Mosby's testimony reminded guests of the importance of continuing to provide services and support for people and communities experiencing poverty.

The Council also launched its inaugural "Community In Action" awards ceremony—celebrating the contributions of awardees in helping to build a healthy, innovative and thriving Central Kentucky. Recipients of the "Community In Action" awards were nominated by community members and organizations. To emcee the "Community In Action" award ceremony, the Council was honored to have Melissa Moore Murphy, senior attorney for the Lexington Fayette Urban County Government (LFUCG) Law Department.

The Council had a chance to learn more about what "Community In Action" means to the awardees. For Lisa Minton, one of the distinguished "Community In Action" award recipients, "Community In Action" represents working together to improve the lives of others in all facets—to connect with other agencies as a community to make it easier for individuals and families to receive the tools and understanding of how to use the tools to become more self-sufficient. As an example, Lisa Minton expressed appreciation for the partnership with the Council to launch the Prep Academy at Chrysalis House. Last year, Lisa Minton and the Council partnered to

launch the Prep Academy at Chrysalis House. Chrysalis House is Kentucky's oldest and largest licensed treatment program for women with substance use disorders, providing a comprehensive continuum of care for over 200 women and children annually. "The Prep Academy has changed lives!" This partnership allows both Chrysalis House and the Council to provide the highest level of care to improve the lives of women and their young children by holistically addressing substance use disorders and opioid addictions.

Central Bank was one of the "Community In Action" stellar agency recipients. On behalf of Central Bank, Mark Fox described a "Community in Action" for Central Bank as helping others to help themselves. Mark shared that Central Bank supports the Council because the Council "helps others to help themselves" through programming that addresses economic and workforce development, energy efficiency, housing, mental health, youth development and programs such as the Head Start Prep Academy. Mark has been with Central Bank for over 30 years and is the currently the Vice President of Commercial Lending, a position that encouraged him to become involved with Community Action Council.

The Council is delighted to celebrate the dedication and hard work of each recipient.

The Council would like to express our sincere gratitude to Lexington Ice for a spectacular live ice sculpture to welcome our guests; MojoFlo, an electrifying band based in Columbus, Ohio whose entrancing melodies and aerial performances by Amber Knicole made the night one to never forget; and to Julius Jenkin's Millennium Robots and the NytroMan Group whose magnetic energy brought everyone to the dance floor. We would also like to thank the many artists and entrepreneurs who were on hand to ensure our guests had an amazing night and the generous support of over 50 local businesses that contributed to the silent auction. All proceeds from "A Summer Soirée" directly support the Council's continual efforts to make Central Kentucky and America a better place to live.

What a night and what an opportunity to celebrate the impact the Council—and its many community partners and supporters—has on our community! As the Promise of Community Action begins: "Community Action changes peoples lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live." The Council couldn't have the impact it does without our community's support. The Council extends its appreciation to all community partners, staff, sponsors, and supporters. We look forward to extending an invitation for you to join us this year at the Council's next annual "A Summer Soirée!"

# THE COUNCIL BEGINS A NEW WORKFORCE INITIATIVE

This story begins in the Spring of 2016, when Melissa Mitchell, Family Development Specialist, and Angie Schalch, Nicholas County Center Manager, began talking with Lenora Kinney, the Workforce & Community Education Coordinator at the Maysville Community and Technical College (MCTC) Licking Valley Campus in Cynthiana, about the possibility of developing a new workforce development program at the Council's Nicholas County Center. "People need jobs, and there aren't many jobs in our area," Angie explained. "But there is always a need for nurse aides."

As the months unfurled, the three set about making a possibility, a reality. Working with MCTC's Medicaid Nurse Aid Program Coordinator, Sally Parker, the group designed a Certified Nursing Aid class and began the accreditation process. Once approval from the accrediting body, the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges, was received, Angie and Sally worked with Johnson Mathers Nursing Home in Carlisle and Harrison Memorial Hospital in Cynthiana to obtain the space and equipment, such as training manikins, hospital beds, stethoscopes, and blood pressure cuffs, necessary to establish a nurse aid training lab at the Council's Nicholas County Center. In March 2018 the lab passed inspection by the state Medicaid Nurse Aide Coordinator and the first class began a week later.

When Shavonne Edwards learned of this new program, she was immediately interested. As a resident of Carlisle and a senior at Nicholas County High School, the convenience and the timing of the class were perfect. "It was a four-week course, four days a week, starting at 8:15 each morning and wrapping up at about 2:15. While there was lecture and a workbook, I remember most the practical instruction involving patient care manikins in a replica nurse aid lab." Soon after completing the class Shavonne went on to pass the state examination and later found employment as a nurse aide at Bourbon Heights Nursing Home in nearby Paris.

When Angie first came up with the possibility of a CNA class being taught at the Nicholas County Center, one of

the first people she shared the idea with was her friend Jodie Sharp. "Jodie jumped on it. She said, 'Good CNAs turn into good nurses and we need good nurses.'" In time, Jodie, who had recently finished her master's degree in nursing, was hired by MCTC to teach the class. Then something happened. "Just a few weeks before the class was to start she was diagnosed with cancer," said Angie, adding: "She told me 'you know what, cancer isn't going to stop me from teaching this class.' And it didn't. Jodie never missed a class." As of this writing, she has taught two of the three classes.

"My first group of students have a special place in my heart. I was being treated for breast cancer -- surgery, chemo, and clinicals. Those students came ready to work," said Jodie. "Our students have their share of challenges and struggles, challenges of juggling learning with responsibilities like child care, and financial struggles. I've taught a couple of classes where a student didn't have a babysitter and I told her to bring that baby with her. I held him while lecturing and it worked out fine."

"Jodie is vested not only in her own work but in the Council's. She goes above and beyond for her students," said Angie.

Jarra Mitchell was working full-time at a local restaurant when she decided to take the class in the fall of 2018. Since she worked during the day, the class's evening hours fit her schedule, while its nearby location kept her close to her Carlisle home. Soon after graduating the class, Jarra began full-time employment as a nurse aide at Bourbon Community Hospital in Paris. "This class is a wonderful thing to have in a small town like Carlisle," she said. "Jodie is a simply wonderful teacher! Always patient, kind, and she sure knows her subject."

Shavonne and Jarra are two of 20 persons who, as of this writing, have completed the course passed the state examination to become a State Registered Nurse Aides, or SRNAs, more commonly known as CNAs. CNAs are eligible to work for a variety of employers but are often found in hospitals and nursing homes.





In some cases, the CNA credential is a first step towards earning additional credentials and building a life-long career in nursing. That is Shavonne's and Jarra's intention. "I'm going to begin working on my Kentucky Medication Aide (KMA) credential soon and hope in time to become a Registered Nurse specializing in neonatal nursing," Shavonne said, adding: "I've always known I wanted to be a nurse." Jarra also plans to begin working towards obtaining the KMA credential and hopes to one day become a Registered Nurse.

The Council's newest workforce

development program, Workforce Opportunity for Rural Communities (WORC), will help those like Shavonne and Jarra do just that. Funded through a grant from the Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration (DOL/ETA), this new, three-year, nearly \$400,000 project will expand the Council's existing CNA program to include classes for the KMA. The KMA program prepares CNAs to administer specific medications in a long-term care facility under the supervision of a licensed nurse. This exciting initiative will also allow the Council's to expand its workforce development

efforts in an entirely new direction by partnering with MCTC to increase access to the college's Unmanned Systems Technology certification program. Slated to begin in Fall 2020, the Drone Operator Specialist Certification training class will help prepare participants for success in this emerging entrepreneurial field.

What began as just a possibility in the spring of 2016 became a reality in the opening months of 2018, then was raised to new levels in the closing months of 2019. Sometimes, 2020 can be foresight.

## PROGRAMMING

Project LIFE (Learning Independence, Fostering Empowerment) assists participants, age 18.5 to 23 years old, who are transitioning out of foster care and are no longer in the care of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services (CHFS). Community Action Council has been providing case management support for Project LIFE participants since July 2014 and recently added a housing assistance component. Since the program's inception, the Council has worked alongside more than 400 former foster youth in Kentucky, from more than 40 counties.

The overall goal of Project LIFE is to reduce homelessness within this vulnerable population and to provide each participant with the tools and assistance needed to improve self-sufficiency. Over the last five years, over 60 percent of Project LIFE participants successfully completed the program and either assumed complete responsibility for their leases or moved into housing suitable for their individual and/or family needs. As a result of completing Project LIFE requirements, most of the participants graduated with gainful employment and/or enrolled in educational programs that opened

additional pathways out of poverty towards self-sufficiency.

## EXPANSION

During the first five years of Project LIFE, Council staff evaluated local housing and community data to identify avenues for potential expansion. After evaluating the data, the Council adjusted the program, in accordance with the research, to yield relevant and positive outcomes. During the sixth program year, the Council, in collaboration with CFHS, began operating the housing component of Project LIFE. As a result of expanding the services to include housing, the Council received more than double the original amount of funding and significantly increased its staffing capacity to better meet the impending needs of the community. The expansion granted program participants with more flexible housing options including living with roommates, utilizing campus housing, room rental options, and additional options for rental rates.

The Council also recognized that a step-down approach to the housing assistance aspect of Project LIFE, combined with a matched-savings element, would provide participants with additional opportunities to

engage in self-sufficient practices while still having the support of program staff and resources. Through this step-down approach, the Council gradually reduced the amount of rental assistance provided, increasing the portion of rent that participants would be responsible for paying. For each month participants paid their personal portion of the rent, the Council allocated a percentage to a personal savings-account for each participant. By diverting a small percentage of participant's rent to a savings account, participants had the opportunity to graduate from Project LIFE with savings of as much as \$2,000, while also gaining the crucial life experience of paying rent.

The expansion also permitted additional services and client benefit offerings. Participants who "aged-out" of care and utilized aftercare services were also eligible for additional assistance, including tuition assistance, housing supplies, crisis/hardship and transportation assistance. Within the first six months of the expansion, the Council reduced barriers and added protective factors for more than 60 participants in Kentucky via Project LIFE.

## YOUTH TESTIMONY

According to former participant Chris Adair, Project LIFE helped him with motivation and becoming more independent. The program empowered him to explore his career path and helped him gain a clearer understanding of what he wanted to do with his life. Chris knew that he had the support from the Project LIFE staff and that he knew he could seek assistance with areas that would help push him.

His favorite aspect of Project LIFE was getting the incentive money for completing the goals that he set to accomplish while enrolled. These goals moved him forward and helped him achieve complete self-sufficiency upon completing Project LIFE. Chris valued

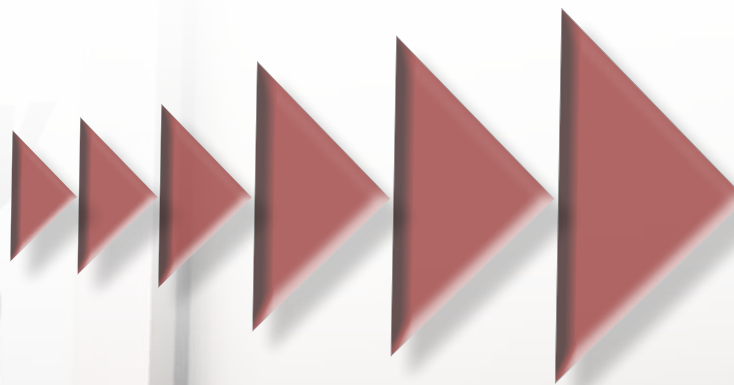
the monthly case manager visits wherein he discussed his goals, hopes, and barriers. During those sessions, Chris appreciated the fact that his case manager helped him find solutions by providing resources, support, and a listening ear. Based on his personal experiences, Chris recommends Project LIFE for any former foster youth who needs an extra helping hand.

Chris is currently in the Army National Guard, which he joined while still participating in Project LIFE. In January 2020, Chris began his Computer Machining credentialing program at Bluegrass Community and Technical College. He is currently employed and earning a livable wage. Thanks to his experience with Project LIFE, Chris has truly achieved self-sufficiency.



# LIFE LESSONS OF **INDEPENDENCE**

community  
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COUNCIL



# THE *Opportunity* TO GO PRO!



## ECCO PLUS MAKING DREAMS COME TRUE

The Council's Head Start programs, in collaboration with the United Way of the Bluegrass, first launched the Employment and Child Care Opportunities (ECCO) program in 2014. ECCO offers Head Start parents an opportunity to study and work toward a professional credential, while receiving comprehensive, high-quality education for their children. In 2017, in partnership with Lexington Fayette County Urban Government, the Council expanded the program to include three training tracks. These tracks include the Child Development Associate (CDA) credential, Class B Commercial Driver's License (CDL), and currently available in Nicholas County only, the Certified Nursing Aid (CNA).

Each ECCO track offers working parents occupational training and education in a locally high-demand, well-paying career field. In addition, participants complete coursework in life skills and employment readiness topics such as financial literacy, workplace communication strategies, conflict resolution, resume writing, and interview preparation. The Council estimates that, to date, the ECCO program represents a return on investment to the community of \$1.7 million. Through its well-established training

tracks, ECCO continues to build a competent early childhood workforce while increasing parental efficacy in supporting children's learning.

### THE CDA TRACK

The ECCO program began by offering a track to the nationally recognized Child Development Associate (CDA) credential—a key credential for career advancement in the field of early childhood education. The CDA track allows the Council to leverage its expertise, resources, and connections in the field of early childhood education to provide a high-quality, comprehensive training program with extensive support that helps graduates obtain and maintain employment. Participants complete 120 training hours, including coursework and independent training modules, as well as 480 volunteer hours in one of the Council's Head Start classrooms.

From 2014-June 2019, 82 participants obtained their CDA through the ECCO program, with the vast majority employed by the Council or in other early education settings. On average, ECCO graduates see an immediate increase in income earnings of \$9,942 annually.

## THE CDL TRACK

Under the name ECCO Plus, the Council expanded its ECCO program in 2017 to include a track to obtain Commercial Driver's License (CDL). Locally and nationally, commercial driving and public transit services are high-demand employment fields, with higher wages. During the 2018-2019 program year, the Council was awarded a grant from the Kentucky Colonels to help purchase a training bus for the CDL program.

Program participants complete a 16-week commercial driving training program, including both coursework and behind-the-wheel vehicle experience. Topics covered during training include vehicle care and maintenance; driving fundamentals; defensive driving; laws and regulations; pupil management; first aid; and accommodating passengers with special needs. Candidates then receive assistance in completing all state licensure requirements for a Class B CDL with Student (S) and Passenger (P) endorsements. As of this writing, eleven individuals obtained their CDL credential through ECCO Plus, and the majority are gainfully employed in commercial driving or a related occupation.

The CDL track also represents an investment in local education by building the school systems' human resource infrastructure, increasing the pool of qualified

school bus drivers within the service area. CDL training specifically addresses the critical shortage of bus drivers faced by school districts across Kentucky and the nation. With the largest expected growth rate of any transit occupation, it is estimated that there will be more than 330,000 job openings in this field nationwide between 2012 and 2022.

The CDL track was built around the strength of the Council's existing transportation services unit, which logged more than 64,330 accident-free miles while transporting 33,350 passengers during the most recent program year.

## THE CNA TRACK

The Council began offering its Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) track in Nicholas County in Spring 2018. Ms. Angie Schalch, the Center Manager in Nicholas County for more than 12 years, has been working for some time to develop a workforce development program to improve employment opportunities in the healthcare field. This initiative is the direct result of those efforts and has led to a continuing partnership with Maysville Community Technical College (MCTC). Ms. Schalch worked alongside Melissa Mitchell, Family Development Specialist and Lenora Kenney, the MCTC Coordinator of Continuing Education and Community

Services, to assess the interest for a CNA training program among families enrolled at the Prep Academy at Nicholas County. The Council then developed a partnership with Johnson Mather's Nursing Home, located in the same building. This partnership is ideal given the employment opportunities for graduates that Johnson Mathers can provide.

To complete the program, participants must complete at least 15 hours of hands-on training, pass clinical and written exams, and pass the state exam required for certification. Offered in collaboration with MCTC, there is a tuition cost associated with the program. However, the majority of participants apply for and receive financial aid, and potential employers, such as Johnson Mathers, often pay the State Exam fee. Over the last year and a half, 25 students have completed the CNA track. Currently, Johnson Mathers employs six of these graduates and another 15 graduates are planning on pursuing further education in nursing. Due to the success of this program, the Council, MCTC and Johnson Mathers are expanding this partnership to include Nicholas County Public Schools in order to offer a joint student co-op program for local High School students.



# FISK WAY

## HEAD START

ALUMNI SCHOLARSHIP





Daikerra Sweat was never an average high school senior. Although every senior should be preparing for their future, Daikerra was more proactive. She always knew she wanted to go to college—specifically a Historically black college and university (HBCU). She also knew that to reach her educational goals, she would have to work hard to earn the scholarships she would need to make her dreams a reality. Daikerra graduated with a cumulative 3.9 GPA from Frederick Douglass High School, earning 15 different scholarships to support her post-secondary education, including Community Action Council's Head Start Alumni Scholarship, with first year funding contributed by NFL Football player Avery Williamson. The Head Start Alumni Scholarship program provides four \$2,500 scholarships for Head Start Alumni to continue their post-secondary education at a two- or four-year college or university.

"Neither one of my parents got a college degree. One of them barely made it out of high school, so it really means a lot to me to be the first one in my family to get a college degree and go to a university," said Daikerra. "It also allowed me to set the tone and be a role model for my siblings... 'If my big sister can do it, I can too.'"

Daikerra first learned about the scholarship from the Council's long-time staff member—and her aunt—Deborah Railey. One requirement of the scholarship application process

was to submit a video explaining how the financial burden of pursuing her college education would impact her family. As a first-generation student, Daikerra was determined to use every opportunity available to follow her dreams. Daikerra quickly recorded and submitted her video and waited to find out if she would be selected. Although admittedly, it was a lengthy application process, she still encourages others to apply.

"That money went to good use and I'm very grateful that I received that scholarship. I encourage other seniors to apply...because it does go a long way," said Daikerra.

Daikerra doesn't claim to be the brightest student, but she prides herself on being one of the most persistent. Daikerra has always asked questions, a trend that started as a little girl with her parents and in her Head Start classroom. She credits Head Start for preparing her for success by instilling the basics: moral skills, colors, the ABCs and her 123s. She also credits her success to maintaining lasting relationships with her Head Start teachers, relationships that are still in existence today.

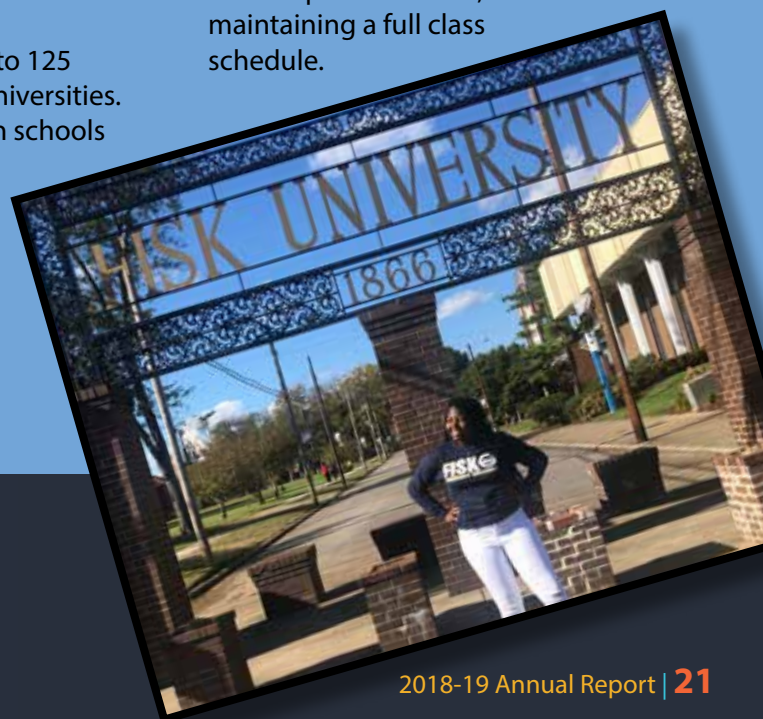
In all, Daikerra applied to 125 different college and universities. After researching which schools would be the best fit for her, Daikerra narrowed down her choices to HBCUs offering a Psychology

program. Ultimately, Daikerra chose Fisk University, a private historically black university located in Nashville, Tennessee, where she received yet another scholarship. During her first college visit and tour at the beginning of the year, Daikerra was not overly impressed. But when she went back in June for a second visit, she fell in love with the campus and community.

"When I got on Fisk's campus on move-in day, people were so friendly, and I just felt that this would be a good community and home for me for the next four years of my life. And so far, it has been," said Daikerra.

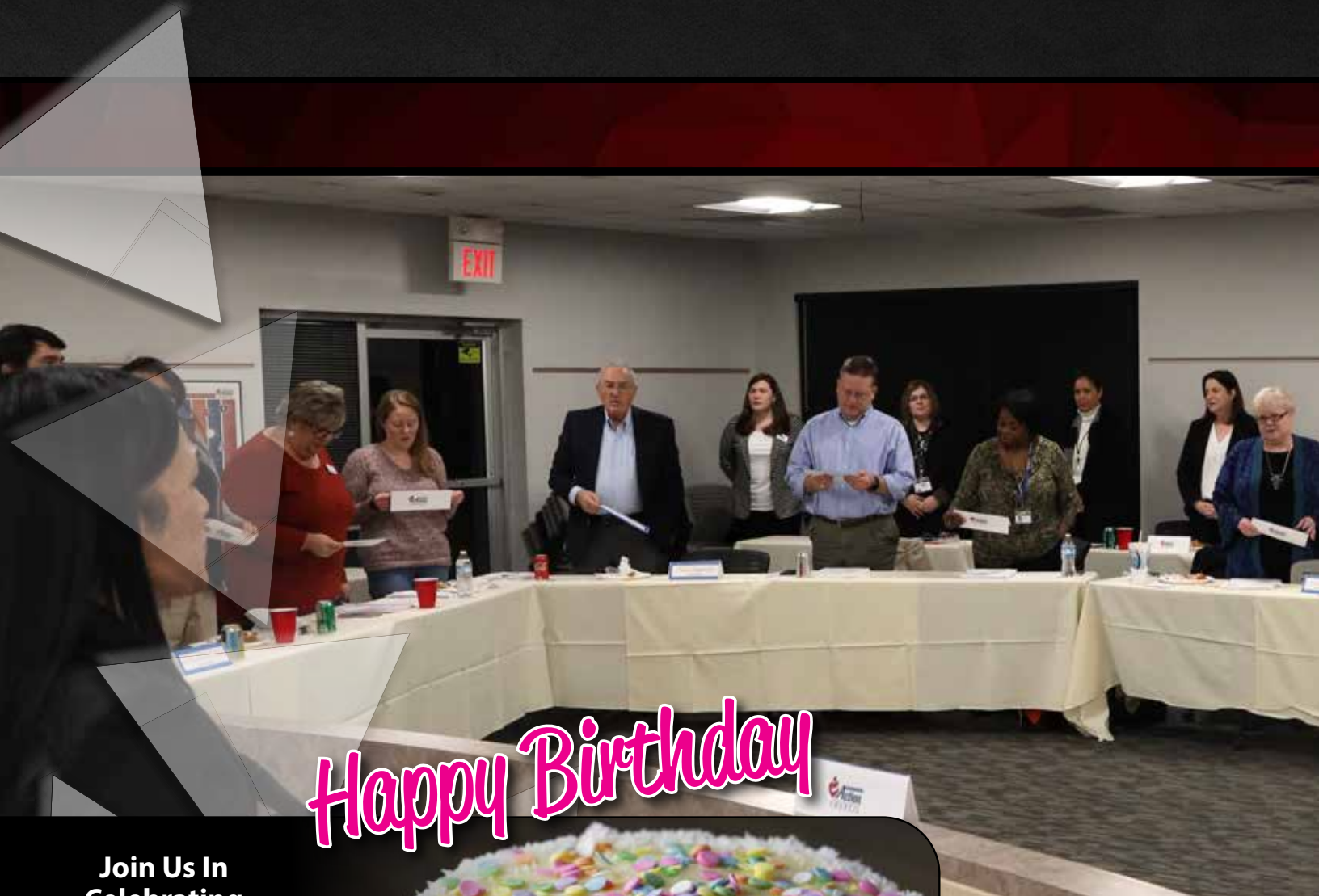
Daikerra is extremely thankful for the scholarship which helped her cover the costs of her books, school supplies, and even an online course. With the remainder of the scholarship award, she purchased Fisk apparel and accessories.

Daikerra is an impressive young lady, currently volunteering on campus with the Enactus International & Community Service organization and Rotary Club. She also exemplifies service to the community as an intern and chaplain assistant, all while maintaining a full class schedule.





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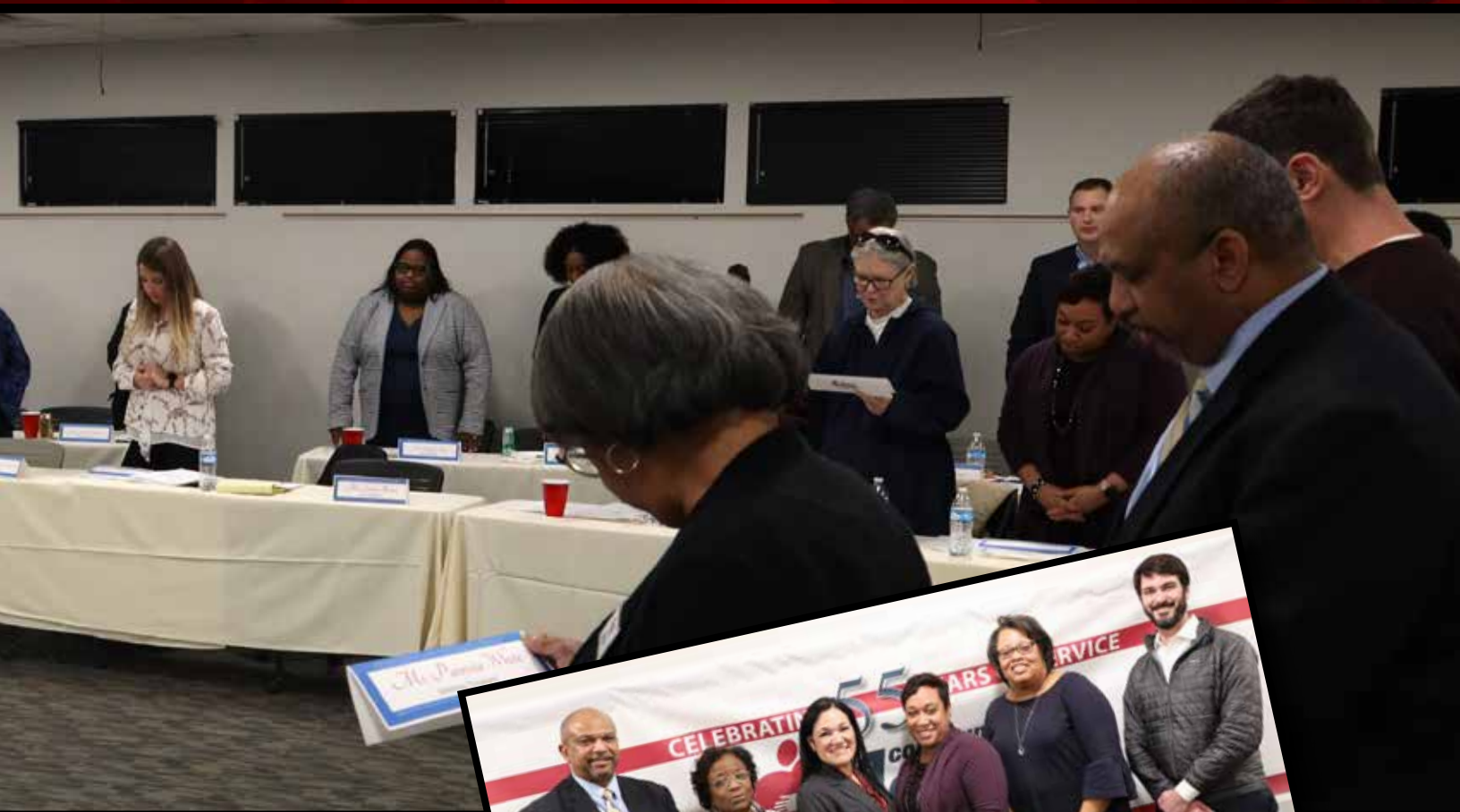
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THE 2020 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



# 2018-2019

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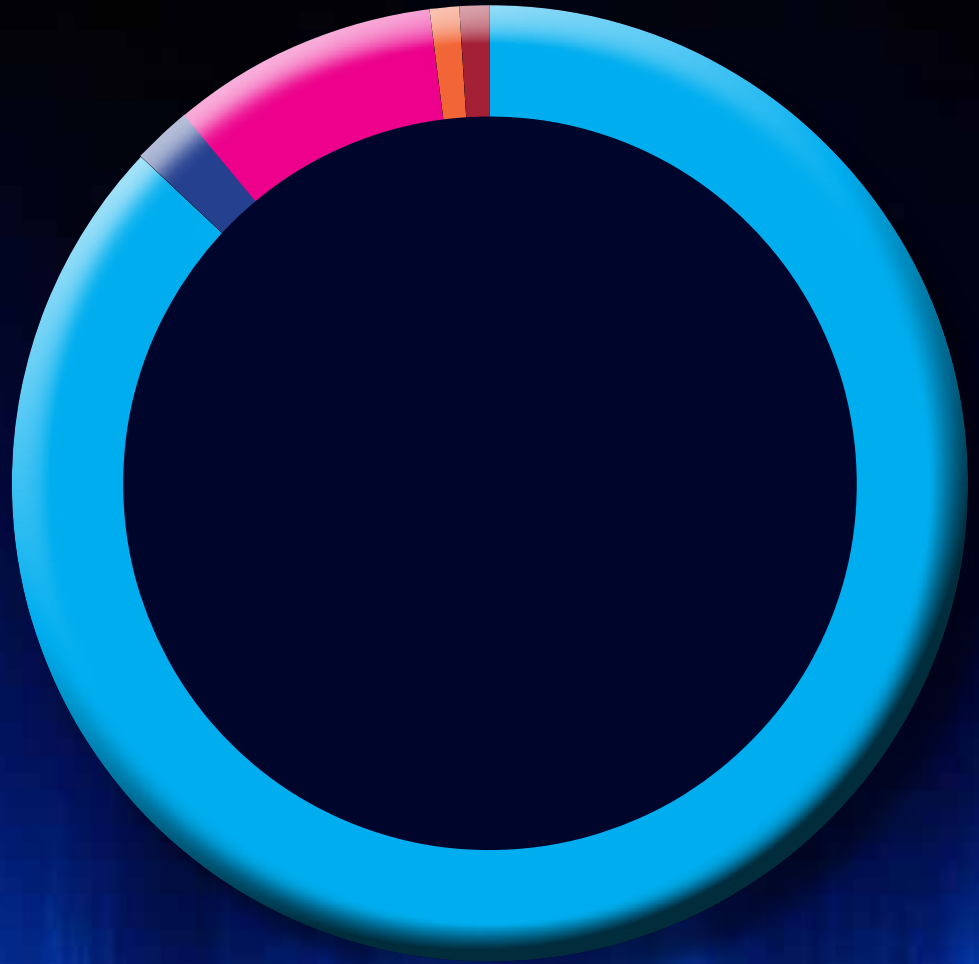
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Wright, Matt  
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Yards, Steve and Trish  
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Ziliak, James



# FISCAL REVIEW 2018-2019



## REVENUE

<b>Federal Revenue</b>	\$25,975,117.00	87%
State Revenue	\$573,376.00	2%
<b>Private Revenue</b>	\$2,751,111.00	9%
<b>Local Revenue</b>	\$313,979.00	1%
<b>In-Kind (GAAP)</b>	\$354,158.00	1%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$29,967,741.00</b>	

## EXPENSES

Salaries	\$10,775,694.00	36%
Fringe Benefits	\$4,337,878.00	14%
Partnership/Contractual	\$5,008,560.00	17%
Supplies	\$1,465,770.00	5%
Space	\$1,508,041.00	5%
Travel	\$447,192.00	1%
Communications & IT	\$489,831.00	2%
Participant Assistance	\$3,215,888.00	11%
In-Kind Expense (GAAP)	\$354,158.00	1%
Other	\$849,131.00	3%

**SubTotal** **\$28,452,143.00**

**Change in Net Assets** **\$1,515,598.00** **5%**

**Total** **\$29,967,741.00**

\* In-Kind excluded from GAAP **\$3,456,155.00**







P.O. Box 11610  
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*This project is funded, in part, under a contract with the Cabinet for Health and Family Services with funds from the Community Services Block Grant Act of the U.S. Department of Health and Humans Services.*